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Date: 6/27/2018 5:13:04 PM
Subject: Status report

Tom,

Greetings to you in Mexico, Germany or wherever you may be ! The following is a mid-summer status report on PSI activities:

SYMPOSIUM ON JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR EX-OFFENDERS: On June 14, we conducted Helping Others Helps Your Company – A Symposium on Enhancing Job Opportunities for Skilled, Qualified Ex-Offenders. The TN Department of Correction (TDOC) and the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission were official co-sponsors, with TDOC underwriting the cost of the event (about \$5000). Over 150 people attended the symposium.

Speakers at the symposium included TDOC Commissioner Tony Parker, TN Department of Labor & Workforce Development Commissioner Burns Phillips, Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland, and Shelby County Mayor Mark Luttrell.

The symposium offered an opportunity for Memphis-area employers to learn more about how they can tap into sources of skilled, qualified workers, while at the same time expand opportunities for ex-offenders and create a pathway to their success in the community. Presentations included information on sources of skilled, qualified ex-offenders, including in-house training programs by TDOC and the Shelby County Division of Corrections, as well as community-based efforts by Hope Works, Workforce Investment Network, Economic Opportunities, Lifeline to Success, and Center for Employment Opportunities.

Approximately half of the attendees completed a survey on their feelings about the symposium. The results were overwhelmingly positive. The program message seems to have been very much on point, and many of the participants and presenters have expressed a desire to do it again next year. If there is a disappointment, it is the absence of most major employers in the Memphis area (which possibly demonstrates the obstacles ex-offenders face). We have had a post-symposium debriefing and have already identified some ways to possibly overcome this hurdle if we do this again.

PSI NEWSLETTER: The good news is that the first edition of our enewsletter is drafted. However, we still have some university hoops to jump through to get it designed (working with Marketing). I anticipate getting it out in mid-July.

STATUS OF GRANT OPPORTUNITIES: Work is underway on our major grant with the TN Office of Criminal Justice Programs related to services to domestic violence victims, with Dr. Amaia Iratzoqui taking the lead.

The Office of Sponsored Programs is currently reviewing a proposed grant agreement with TDOC to geographically map services available to ex-offenders.

We are in discussions with Workforce Investment Network regarding evaluation of one or more training programs for ex-offenders. We are also looking at a possible Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs grant opportunity in this

area. In addition, a local ex-offender assistance effort called Lifeline to Success has asked us to submit a proposal for an independent evaluation of its efforts.

A major local foundation has expressed interest in funding an evaluation of the state's new system of administrative sanctions for violations of probation and parole. We have submitted a proposal, which involves a donation from that foundation to the U of M Foundation and earmarked to the PSI for this purpose.

Dr. Madden worked with the D.A.'s office, county government, and UT on a major opioid treatment grant which focuses on individuals at high risk of overdosing. The grant application has been submitted and designates the PSI as the research partner.

Wherever you are, have been, and plan to be, I hope you are having a great summer !

Bill Gibbons

Executive Director

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